

Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:

Please amend claim 19, so that the claims read as follows:

1-4 (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) A method of accelerating the microbiological maturing process in making raw sausage, the method comprising the steps of:

providing comminuted raw sausage meat;

adding to the comminuted raw sausage meat in uniform distribution a quantity of about 4 mg to about 25 mg per kilogram of raw sausage meat at least one material selected from the group consisting of folic acid and folate; and

allowing the raw sausage meat to mature microbiologically after addition of the material.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of adding spice to the comminuted raw sausage meat.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the spice comprises at least one of ground black pepper and shredded black pepper.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the material is added in a substantially uniform distribution during the step of adding spice.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the raw sausage meat comprises beef, pork and pork fat.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of forming sausages by filling the raw sausage meat, spice and material into sausage casings.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of washing the sausages in water.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of treating the exterior of the sausages with edible mold dissolved in water.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of storing the sausages for a predetermined time at a predetermined relative humidity and temperature.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the predetermined time is about 21 days.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the sausages are stored for an initial three days at a relative humidity of about 93% and a temperature of 23° C.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the sausages are stored for an additional two days at a relative humidity of about 88% and a temperature of 22° C.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the sausages are thereafter stored at a relative humidity of about 74% and a temperature of about 13° C.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the quantity of the material per kilogram of raw sausage meat is about 10 mg.

19. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein the acceleration amounts to a reduction of maturing time of more than 50%, compared to standardized raw sausage without added folic acid or folate.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the microbiological maturing step commences after stuffing the raw sausage meat into sausage casings.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein no starter cultures are added in the process.